Humility: The Secret Of Redemption

By Andrew Murray

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant; and humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death. Wherefore God also highly exalted Him" (Philippians 2:5-7).

No tree can grow except on the root from which it sprang. Through all its existence it can only live with the life that was in the seed that gave it being. The full apprehension of this truth in its application to the first and the second Adam cannot but help us understand both the need and the nature of the redemption there is in Jesus.

The Need of Redemption

The old serpent, the devil, had been cast out from heaven for his pride. His whole nature as devil was pride. When he spoke his words of temptation into the ear of Eve, these words carried with them the very poison of hell. When she listened and yielded her desire and her will to the prospect of being as God, knowing good and evil, the poison entered into her soul and blood and life. This destroyed for ever that blessed humility and dependence upon God which would have been our everlasting happiness.

Instead of this, her life and the life of the race that sprang from her became corrupted to its very root with that most terrible of all sins and all curses, the poison of Satan's own pride. All the wretchedness of which this world has been the scene has its origin in what this cursed, hellish pride, either our own or that of others, has brought us--all its wars and bloodshed among the nations, all its selfishness and suffering, all its ambitions and jealousies, all its broken hearts and embittered lives, with all its daily unhappiness.

It is pride that made redemption needful. It is from our pride we need above everything to be redeemed. Our insight into the need of redemption will largely depend upon our knowledge of the terrible nature of the power that has entered our being.

The power that Satan brought from hell, and cast into man's life is working daily, hourly with mighty power throughout the world. Men suffer from it. They fear and fight and flee it. Yet they know not from where it comes nor from where it has its terrible supremacy. No wonder they do not know where or how it is to be overcome.

Pride has its root and strength in a terrible spiritual power outside of us as well as within us. As needful as it is that we confess and deplore it as our very own, it is needful to know its satanic origin. If this leads us to utter despair of ever conquering or casting it out, it will lead us all the sooner to that supernatural power in which alone our deliverance is to be found--the redemption of the Lamb of God.

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The hopeless struggle against the workings of self and pride within us may indeed become still more hopeless as we think of the power of darkness behind it all. The utter despair will fit us the better for realizing and accepting a power and a life outside of ourselves to cast out Satan and his pride, even the humility of heaven as brought down and brought nigh by the Lamb of God. Only the humility of heaven can cast out Satan and his pride.

Even as we need to look to the first Adam and his fall to know the power of the sin within us, we need to know well the second Adam and His power to give within us a life of humility as real and abiding and overmastering as has been that of pride. We have our life from and in Christ as truly, yes, more truly, than from and in Adam. We are to walk "rooted in Him" (Col. 2:7), "holding fast the Head from whom the whole body...increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

The Nature of Redemption

The life of God which entered human nature in the Incarnation, is the root in which we are to stand and grow. It is the same almighty power that worked in the Incarnation and from there onward to the resurrection, which works daily in us. Our one need is to study and know and trust the life that has been revealed in Christ as the life that is now ours, and waits for our consent to gain possession and mastery of our whole being.

In this view it is of inconceivable importance that we should have right thoughts of what Christ is. What really constitutes Him the Christ and especially, what may be counted His chief characteristic, the root and essence of all His character as our Redeemer? There can be but one answer: it is His humility. What is the Incarnation but His heavenly humility, His emptying Himself and becoming man? What is His life on earth but humility, His taking the form of a servant? What is His atonement but humility? "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death" (Phil. 2:8).

What is His ascension and His glory, but humility exalted to the throne and crowned with glory? "He humbled Himself...therefore God highly exalted Him" (Phil. 2:9). In heaven, where He was with the Father, in His birth, in His life, in His death, in His sitting on the throne--in all, it is nothing but humility.

Christ is the humility of God embodied in human nature, the Eternal Love humbling itself, clothing itself in the garb of meekness and gentleness, to win and serve and save us. As the love and condescension of God make Him the benefactor and helper and servant of all, so Jesus of necessity was the Incarnate Humility. So He is still the meek and lowly Lamb even in the midst of the throne.

If this is the root of the tree, its nature must be seen in every branch and leaf and fruit. If humility is the first, the all-including grace of the life of Jesus--if humility is the secret of His atonement--then the health and strength of our spiritual life will entirely depend upon our putting this grace first too. We will make humility the chief thing we admire in Him, the chief thing we ask of Him, the one thing for which we sacrifice all else.

Is it any wonder that the Christian life is so often feeble and fruitless when the very root of the Christ life is neglected or unknown? Is it any wonder that the joy of salvation is so little felt when

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that in which Christ found it and brings it is so little sought? It is a humility which will rest in nothing less than the end and death of self, which gives up all the honor of men as Jesus did, to seek the honor that comes from God alone. It absolutely makes and counts itself nothing that God may be all, that the Lord alone may be exalted.

Until such a humility be what we seek in Christ above our chief joy, and welcome at any price, there is very little hope of a religion that will conquer the world.

I cannot too earnestly plead with my reader to pause and ask whether he sees much of the spirit of the meek and lowly Lamb of God in those who are called by His name. Let him consider how all want of love, all indifference to the needs, the feelings, the weakness of others, all sharp and hasty judgments and utterances, so often excused under the plea of being outright and honest, all manifestations of temper and touchiness and irritation, all feelings of bitterness and estrangement--have their root in nothing but pride that ever seeks itself. His eyes will be opened to see how a dark, shall I not say, a devilish pride creeps in almost everywhere. The assemblies of the saints are not excepted.

Let him begin to ask what would be the effect if in himself and around him, if toward fellow saints and the world, believers were really permanently guided by the humility of Jesus. Let him say if the cry of our whole heart night and day ought not to be, Oh, for the humility of Jesus in myself and all around me!

Let him honestly fix his heart on his own lack of the humility which has been revealed in the likeness of Christ's life and in the whole character of His redemption, and he will begin to feel as if he had never yet really known what Christ and His salvation is.

Believer, study the humility of Jesus! This is the secret, the hidden root of your redemption. Sink down into it deeper day by day. Believe with your whole heart that this Christ whom God has given you will enter in to dwell and work *within* you even as His divine humility wrought redemption *for* you. He will make you what the Father would have you be.

– From *Humility, The Beauty Of Holiness* by Andrew Murray.

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